

Darjeeling District in the Study of Regional History

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Abstract:

Dorjeeling, later anglicised as Darjeeling, was 'discovered' by Captain Lloyd and J.W. Grant in 1829 as a respite for the British from the tropical climate. This small town, under the shadows of Kunchendzonga range, also called the 'old Gorkha Station', then deserted by the original tribal inhabitants known as Lepchas and Limbus after the suppression of a rebellion, had less than 100 inhabitants. Darjeeling and its surrounding region share a complex history with Bhutan, Nepal, and Sikkim passing from one kingdom to another finally being annexed by the British empire in 1866. The present article attempted to review critically the historiography of Darjeeling and to some extent, traced the question of regional history writings of the colonial and post-colonial period largely influence the writings on the hills. The latter constitutes a remarkable diversity not only in terms of approach but also in terms of technique. Therefore, there are ample scopes to dig out the new research arena.

Keywords: *Anglicised, Tropical Climate, Historiography, Diversity, Research Arena*

The local or regional history is four hundred years old but its real positive swing could be visible from the Second World War. This surge is, ascribed to the rapid spread of education and as W.G. Hoskins said "as the modern world becomes bigger and more incomprehensible people are more inclined to study something of which they can grasp the scale and in which they can find a personal and individual meaning."¹ The radio and television programmes helped to boost up the popularity of local and regional history. The Camden History Society; the Finland Historical Society; the Offa's Dyke Association; the High Wycombe History Society; the Warrington and District Archaeological and Historical Society; the Durham County are examples of local history's popularity and came into being to cater to the local needs. The concept of 'Leicester School' first coined by A. Briggs did emerge to popularize the study of Local History in England. The study of communities particularly the smaller communities and obviously on social entities helped to develop such trends. It declared its maiden goal "to re-enact in his mind, and to portray for his readers, the origin, growth, decline and fall of a local community".²

The establishment of colonial rule in the Indian sub-continent demanded the creation of imperial ideology and as a corollary to this dogma, the birth of imperial historiography was

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1. W.G. Hoskins and David Hey, *Local History in England*. London:Routledge, 1984, pp. 6-7

2. H.P.R. Finberg, *The Local Historian and His theme*, Finberg: Leicester University Press, 1952, p. 9

quite a natural phenomenon. The establishment of the Asiatic Society in 1784, the inauguration of oriental studies gave an immense boost for the study of oriental works of literature and the production of history books, not for academic pursuit but to cater to the needs of schools children at the outset became the primary objective. Charles Stuart's *History of Bengal*, John Clark Marshman's *Outline of the History of Bengal Compiled for the Youths in India* can be cited as an example in this respect. Francis Buchanan Hamilton's *Statistical Description of Hindoosthan 3 Vols*, Walter Hamilton's *The East Indian Gazetteers of Hindusthan 2 Vols*. Montgomery Martin's *The History, Antiquities, Topography and Statistics of Eastern India 3Vols* (Based on the reports of Francis Buchanan) London 1838 were published with the explicit Imperial administrative needs. In the later phase, W.W. Hunter's *Annals of Rural Bengal* received much appreciation. His grueling tour of districts in Bengal produced a monumental *Statistical Account of Bengal* in 20 volumes. This spirit of the administrative exercise was replicated in William Hunter's *Imperial Gazetteer, Bengal provincial Series 2 Vols*. Oxford. These can be treated as primary sources for the construction of local histories. Kev. G.R.Gleig's *Memoirs of Warren Hastings*, Rev. James Long's article on the Banks of the Bhagirathi published in *Calcutta Review* can be cited as fine observations of villages, towns in Bengal.

On the northern frontier of India, the development of Himalayan Studies also had imperial designs. Although Tibet remained stubbornly inaccessible to British observers, the Himalayas from the Sutlej to the Brahmaputra had come under increasingly rigorous scientific scrutiny since the 1820s, its geology, meteorology, botany and (due principally to Hodgson) its zoology and ethnography subject to ever-close observation and more exciting analysis.³ From the 1830s to 1850s, the whole Himalayas region became a vibrant ground and frontier of colonial knowledge. Joseph Dalton Hooker's *Himalayan Journals or notes of a Naturalist in Bengal, the Sikkim and Nepal Himalayas, the Khasia mountains* published in 1854, Brian Houghton Hodgson's *On the Physical Geography of the Himalayas* can be seen in this perspective. While Hodgson was a strong belief about the necessity of establishing a white colony in the Himalayan regions, Hooker followed this ideal with some sort of enthusiasms'. In an article written in 1856, Hodgson expressed that 'I feel more and more convinced that the encouragement of colonization therein is one of the highest and most important duties of Government.'⁴

Bengal in particular had a rich legacy of local history observations. *Riyaz-us-Salatin, Ramcharita, Ballal Charita, Mangalkanyas* provided quite a formidable backdrop. At the end of the nineteenth century, Bankimchandra's expression of frustration about lack of interest in the study of history was followed by initiatives taken by Rajanikanta Gupta, Satish Chandra Mitra, Akshay Kanta Gupta, Akshay Kumar Moitreyya, Durgachandra Sanyal, Dinesh Chandra Sen, Rakhaldas Bandyopadhyay.

3 David Arnold, Hodgson, Hooker and the Himalayan Frontier, 1848-1850, in David M. Waterhouse (ed.), *The Origins of Himalayan Studies: Brian Houghton Hodgson in Nepal and Darjeeling, 1820-1858*, London: Royal Asiatic Society Books, 2005, p. 196

4 . *Ibid*, p.205.5

In the introductory portion of Akshay, Kumar Moitreya edited the short-lived journal *Oitibasik Chitra*. Rabindranath Tagore gave much importance to the study of village rumours, folklore. This was a statement that was vindicated by Claude Levi Straus nearly after a century. Akshay Kumar Moitreya author of *Gour Lekhamala* to retrieve the past glory of Ancient Bengal made meticulous research and translation of inscriptions. In this respect, he did not subscribe to the interpretations previously offered by Willkins, Colebrook, Shultz, Rajendralal Mitra and Haraprasad Sashtri. He was also instrumental in publishing a trilateral journal named *Oitibasik Chitra*. In 1910 to solidify regional historiography, he establishes *Barendra Anusandhan Samiti*. Further, he planned to publish *Gour Bibaran* in different volumes. In an introductory note to Ramaprosad Chanda's '*Gour Rajmala*,' he emphasized giving more importance to '*Desher Abastha*' (the condition of the country) than emphasizing the nature of *Jati* (caste) of Pala, Sen kings. In the colonial period, nationalist local historians gave much importance to historical truth. Rajanikanta Gupta devised certain guidelines for the budding historians — a. to educate the people and in this perspective, there should be always vindication of truth and attractive historical writings b. there should be discipline in the method of historical writing c. the nature of history writing should not be polluted by the use of local dialects or rural products d. a historian should always give judgments e. a historian while writing local history should not be tempted to glorify his localities.⁵

Historiography generally refers to studies, sources, critical methods and interpretations used by scholars to explore the past of human beings of a particular region. It is neither solely political, nor social, nor moral nor literary history, but in a way a combination of all these into one. In recent times there has been a drastic change not merely in approach, treatment and technique but also in the digital volume of historical literature. Therefore, "Historiography is nothing but the history of history."⁶ Attempts have been made to explore the past with a more vast perspective of inter-disciplinary approaches. Therefore, historiography not only appeared in estimating the contribution of a historian but also in recent times, tended to reflect the development of 'historical consciousness' and aims at developing a 'historical consciousness'; rather it is a process of identifying the facts making an intelligible 'sense of continuity to understand an existing identity or to develop one for the future of the society.'⁷ The present article made an attempt to review critically the historiography of Darjeeling and to some extent, traced the question of regional history writings of existing works of literature and focus on the region as well as its inhabitants. The historians of the colonial and post-modern periods largely influence the writings on the hills. The latter constitutes a remarkable diversity not only in

⁵ Rajanikanta Gupta, '*ItibasRachanarPronali*', *Sabitya-Parishat - Patrika*, Pancham Barsha, ProthamSankhya,1305 B.S.

⁶ B. Sheik Ali, *History; Its Theory and Method*, Delhi:Trinity Press, 1982, p. 212

⁷ John Lewis Gaddis, *The Landscape of History How Historians Map the Past*, New York: Oxford ;University press, 2004, chapter-1

terms of approach but also in terms of technique. Creation and writing history of Darjeeling - both are credited to be initiated by the British. The modern district of Darjeeling was originated by the annexation of a 138 sq. mile area from the *Sikkimputte* in 1835. It was followed by several boundary reorganizations before it got its present form. The Morang and Kalimpong areas were annexed in 1849 and 1865 respectively. And finally, Darjeeling deserved its present form in 1866.⁸

In 1876, W.W Hunter's first writing in the form of a book on Darjeeling namely *Statistical Account of Bengal Vol. X*.⁹ It is one of the parts of a series of 'Statistical Account of Bengal'. Before this, a few articles were published from some reputed journals such as the 'Calcutta Review', 'Bengal Past and Present' etc. Though J. D Hooker's *Himalayan Journals* volume II came into existence before Hunter it is not of this kind. Hunter's account is the first of this kind to deal with the history of Darjeeling in detail from 1835 to 1876.

Fred Pinn had written and edited books on the early history of Darjeeling; including 'The Road of Destiny'; 'Darjeeling Letters 1839' in 1852. It is a collection of letters that recounts the slow and laborious construction of the magnificent Himalayan resort, Darjeeling. Gleaned from the confidential consultations of the Supreme Council of the British in Calcutta and the public correspondences sent to newspapers of the period, these letters provide a valuable portrait of the social, economic, and ethnographic factors influencing 19th-century Indian urban development. On the planters' history, only one authentic work is credited to Fred Pinn.¹⁰ 'Darjeeling Pioneers: The Wernicke - Stölke Story'; in this book, he describes the fascinating story of three generations of two of the great Tea Planting families of Darjeeling: the Wernickes and the Stölkes; from the 1840s through to the end of the British Empire in India.¹¹

The important works (*Bengal District Gazetteers Darjeeling*) had done by O' Malley and Arthur Jules Dash on Darjeeling District. Both authors dealt with the history of people, health, flora and fauna, improvement of industries, agriculture, the establishment of administration, expansion of trade and commerce, development of education, transport and communication, etc. But they do not give any extra emphasis on the history of socio-economic activities. A third gazetteer was published in 1980 by the West Bengal Government. It does not exceptional but follows the former's tradition.

There was some tourist guide book written by the writers which are also important information about Darjeeling for her beauty and commercial perspectives. These are- R.D. O'Brien wrote

⁸ Anil Kumar Sarkar, *Gorkha Identity and Separate Statehood Movement*, Global Journal of Human Social Science-GJHSS-D, vol. 14 Issue 1, 2014, p.1 <https://globaljournals.org/item/2994-gorkha-identity-and-separate-statehood-movement>

⁹ W.W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Bengal- Vol. X*, London, 1876, <http://hdl.handle.net/10689/2133>

¹⁰ Pannalal Dhar, *Ethnic Unrest in India and Her Neighbours: Also Includes Europe, West Asia*, 1998, p.184

Ibid, p.186¹¹

Darjeeling, the Sanatorium of Bengal and its Surroundings in 1883, Mitchell Edmund wrote Thacker's Guide Book to Darjeeling and its Neighborhood in 1899, W. Newman wrote Newman's Guide to Darjeeling and its Surroundings in 1913, Percy Brown wrote Tours in Sikkim and Darjeeling District in 1922, L.A. Waddell wrote Among the Himalayas in 1900. A Concise History of the Darjeeling District Since 1835 by E.C. Dozey is something of a history, something of a guide and pleasantly encyclopedic. The author tells all about old Darjeeling describes the various hill people and gives an account of trips out of Darjeeling. It also contains small chapters on industries, flora and fauna, shikar and reminiscences of the author. It also gives the list of tours and descriptions of Kurseong, Kalimpong and Siliguri. It provides a small chapter on the trade and commerce of Darjeeling town and its neighboring areas.

E.C. Dozey wrote the book entitled, A Concise History of the Darjeeling District Since 1835. He discussed in his book the businesses that developed in Darjeeling hills in the colonial-capitalist hegemony. In general, the book focused on the sense of commercial trade or financial activities that occupy time, attention, and labour of human beings and the investment of capital for the sake of profit to the improvement of society, the economy of any country. Those who engage in these constructive works are generally known as businessmen. A business or enterprise or sometimes a firm is an organization engaged in the trade of goods services or both to consumers. No economy- capitalist or socialist can thrive without business. In capitalist economies, businesses are in most cases privately owned and administered to earn profit to increase the wealth of their owners whereas in the other it is predominantly state-owned.¹² Beside these firsthand accounts written in English one or two books had been found in Bengali. *Darjeelinger Itibas* had been written by Harry Mohan Sannyal in Bengali in 1880. The author of this book also gave some general history of this district.¹³

There are ample unpublished archival sources that partially provided important information regarding the history of Darjeeling such as 'Selections from the Records on the Bengal Government', 'Consultations, Fort William' 'General Report on Public Instruction in the Lower Provinces of the Bengal', the 'Annual General Administration Report of Darjeeling', 'Municipal records', 'Proceedings of the Bengal Government, Report on the Trade Frontier Stations in Bengal' 'House of Commons papers: Great Britain, Parliament House of Commons', 'The Law times reports: containing all the cases argued and Determined', 'the correspondence of the industrial department', 'Colonial and Foreign Department; Transactions and proceedings of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh', and 'Report of the Statutory Commission'. The journals are also regarded as important documents such as the 'Calcutta Review', the 'Bengal Past and Present', the 'Journal of the Society of Arts', the 'Tea and Coffee Journal, etc.

The colonial historians tried to identify the ethnic origin of the Nepalese and to some extent masculinity of the race in a strange way to highlight their racial superiority and cultural

¹² Dozey, E.C. *A Concise History of the Darjeeling District since 1835*, 1922, Calcutta:Reprint, Pranava Books, 2020, p. 2

¹³ Harry Mohan Sannyal, *Darjeelinger Itibas*, Bengali in 1880, Calcutta, reprint 2008

differences. Hunter described them as a 'pushing and thriving race', and O' Malley identified them with the Mongolian race. The Gorkha as a 'martial race', was first identified by the colonial historiographers and the epithet largely used after the Great Rebellion of 1857. The British Administrator and intellectuals tried their level best to understand the racial, cultural, and own regional variations to rule them by their national traits and create a rationale feeling among the indigenous to continue their economic exploitation in the disguise of improvement of the district.

Jahar Sen has written the book entitled 'A Favoured Retreat.' His research is an authentic but partial research work of the author in this sense that it only dealt with the history of commercial interaction of the district with its neighbouring Trans- Himalayan states like Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, and Tibet, etc. By the turn of the 19th century Darjeeling had attained maturity as an urban centre by any definition; be it population, or political/administrative role, or availability of civic amenities, or economic/institutional role.¹⁴

Some scholars have been attracted to research the urban development of Darjeeling. Kashinath Ojha has done his Ph.D. thesis (unpublished thesis, North Bengal University) on 'Nineteenth Century Darjeeling: A study in Urbanization 1835-1890.' He traced the process of urbanization in Darjeeling up to 1890s.¹⁵ Karubaki Datta's edited book is 'Urbanisation in the Eastern Himalayas: Emergence and issues'. This book has not only explored the process of urbanization based on historical perspective but also analyzed the inner texture of urbanization and its impact on socio-economic sustainability based on inter-disciplinary approaches.¹⁶ K.C Bhanja wrote the book entitled 'Darjeeling at a Glance' merely encyclopedic work that dealt with the general history of the region. Both 'Descriptive and Historical of Darjeeling and Sikkim with Thrilling Accounts of Everest and Kanchenjunga Expeditions by Land and Air.'¹⁷

Tanka Bahadur Subba's book is 'Ethnicity, state, development: a case study of the Gorkhaland. He has given an account of the history of Gorkha ethnicity, cultural distinctiveness, and evolution of the Gorkha self-identity.'¹⁸ Mahendra P. Lama wrote the book, 'Gorkhaland movement: the quest for identity. He has explained the causes of the upheavals and portrays the political, economic and social consequences.'¹⁹

¹⁴ Jahar Sen, *A Favoured Retreat*, Calcutta, 1989

¹⁵ Kashinath Ojha, *Nineteenth Century Darjeeling: A study in Urbanization 1835-1890*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of North Bengal, 1999, p.225

¹⁶ Karubaki Datta, *Urbanisation in the Eastern Himalayas: Emergence and Issues*, Serial Publications, New Delhi, 2006

¹⁷ K.C Bhanja, *Darjeeling at a Glance*, Oxford Book & Stationery Company, 1959, p. 5

¹⁸ Tanka Bahadur Subba, *Ethnicity, State, and Development: a case study of the Gorkhaland movement in Darjeeling*, New Delhi, 1992

¹⁹ Mahendra P. Lama, *Gorkhaland movement: the Quest for identity*, Darjeeling, 1996

A.C. Sinha and T.B. Subba wrote the book is 'Indian Nepalis: Issues and Perspectives.' This compendium of twenty-five papers, presented at a national seminar, organized by the Indian Nepalis Study and Research Forum, addresses the problems of the nationality of Indian Nepalis. Examining the conceptual and theoretical issues related to the identity of Indian Nepalis, the contributors deliberate on their search for Indian national identity without losing the regional and local perspectives that are equally important because Indian Nepalis live under different circumstances in different parts of India. They also deal with the identity crisis of Indian Nepali youths, trafficking of Nepali women in India, the herbal medicinal culture of Nepalis, and linkage between India and Nepal with a special focus on history, literature and people.²⁰ Regional movements: politics of language, ethnicity-identity volume 76 of Monograph (1992) (Indian Institute of Advanced Study) Sajal Basu, 'Ethnic Unrest in India and Her Neighbours: Also Includes Europe, West Asia'(1998) by Pannalal Dhar, 'Gorkhaland Movement: A Study in Ethnic Separatism' (2000) by Amiya K. Samanta, 'Peace as process: reconciliation and conflict resolution in South Asia '(2001) Raṇabīr Samāddāra, Helmut Reifeld, Konrad-Adenauer-Stifting 'Martial races: the military, race, and masculinity in British' (2004) by Heather Streets 'The unrest axle: ethno-social movements in Eastern India'(2008) by Gautam Kumar Bera, 'Ethnicity and regional politics of Eastern and North East India' (2014)by Anil Kumar Sarkar. The authors reconstructed the story of the community based on historical as well as ethnographic data and explain forces that led to the consolidation of social and cultural life towards the formation of Gorkha national identity. In which one important article by Anil Kumar Sarkar is 'ethnic identity and separate statehood movement in Darjeeling.

Barun Roy has written the book entitled 'A Socio-Political Study of the Gorkha People and the Gorkhaland Movement'. He has focussed Gorkhas and Gorkhaland. This is one of the most comprehensive books to be written on the issue of the Gorkhas in India.²¹ The political history of Darjeeling Hills where the Gorkhaland Movement is centred, meanwhile comprehensively dealt. Romit Bagchi authored the book 'Gorkhaland: Crisis of Statehood'. The main focus theme of the book is Gorkhaland is an attempt by a journalist to unravel the various layers of the ongoing crisis in the Darjeeling hills, where the Nepali-speaking community is locked in a political struggle with the state of Bengal, of which it is a part. The author endeavours to delve into the deeper recesses of the psyche of the Gorkha community settled in these restive hills and attempts to put the prevailing stereotypes under a subjective scanner.²² Moxham Roy's book is A Brief History of Tea: Addiction, Exploitation, and Empire. Behind the wholesome image of the World's most popular drink lies a strangely murky and often violent past. When tea began to be imported into the West from China in the seventeenth century, its high price

²⁰A.C. Sinha and T.B. Subba, *Indian Nepalis: Issues and Perspectives*, Concept Publishing co, 2009

²¹Barun Roy, *A Socio-Political Study of the Gorkha People and the Gorkhaland Movement*, Amazon, 2016

²² Romit Bagchi, *Gorkhaland: Crisis of Statehood*, New Delhi:Sage publications, 2012

and heavy taxes made it an immediate target for smuggling and dispute at every level, culminating in international incidents like the notorious Boston Tea Party.²³

Parimal Bhattacharya has written the book *Darjeeling: Smriti Samaj Itibas*. Encrusted with British nostalgia and Bengali romanticism, Darjeeling is a melting pot of tribes and communities. Bhattacharya went to work there in the early 1990s when things were cooling down after a long and bloody agitation.²⁴ Two decades later, the pot is on the boil again. K.C Bhanja's book is *History of Darjeeling and the Sikkim Himalaya*. Darjeeling and Sikkim Himalaya, with their sublime snowy ranges and the fabulous Kanchenjunga, have no parallel in their physical charm and the mountaineering challenges it offers. Explorer and writer K.C. Bhanja has depicted the land and the people, the legends and expeditions, the religions and rituals of the region in authentic colours. He has delved deep into the mystique of the Himalayas, bringing out yet unknown historical facts and figures, including the expeditions by brave men who came here for the love of adventure and opened the virgin territory for others to see and enjoy.²⁵

Nandini Bhattacharyya Panda has written the book *Culture, Heritage, and Identity: The Lepcha and Mangar Communities of Sikkim and Darjeeling*. This book is about cultural politics and the quest for identity of two marginal communities of Sikkim and Darjeeling – the Lepcha and the Mangar.²⁶ Sharing insights into the knowledge, aesthetics, aspirations and dreams of two marginal communities who have been innovatively and differentially appropriating 'culture' to exploit the politics of difference, it is a narrative about their ethno-cultural consciousness, notions of identity and anxieties over being minority communities in a pluralistic democracy. The narrative is essentially presented in the form of a field-trip diary, with observations and comments which try to situate the issues within a larger perspective. Based on two years of intensive field study, the book chronicles the endeavour of these two communities to reclaim their cultural past, and forge an identity that would ensure material security, self-esteem, dignity and also the fruits of 'modernity'.

A.S.D Campbell wrote the book *On the Tribes Around Darjeeling*. This work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it.²⁷ Parimal Bhattacharya wrote another important book *No Path in Darjeeling is Straight: Memories of a Hill Town*. *No Path in Darjeeling Is Straight* is a memory of his time in the iconic town and one of the finest works of Indian non-fiction in recent years. He evocatively

²³ Moxham Roy, *A Brief History of Tea: Addiction, Exploitation, and Empire*, Robinson, 2009
Parimal Bhattacharya, *Darjeeling: Smriti Samaj Itibas*, Ababhash, 2011²⁴
²⁵ K.C Bhanja, *History of Darjeeling and the Sikkim Himalaya*, Delhi:Gyan Publishing House, 2011

²⁶ Nandini Bhattacharyya, *Culture, Heritage, and Identity: The Lepcha and Mangar Communities of Sikkim and Darjeeling*, KW Publishers Pvt Ltd, 2015

²⁷ A.S.D Campbell, *On the Tribes Around Darjeeling*, Wentworth Press, 2016

describes his arrival, through drizzle and impenetrable fog, at a place that was at odds with the grand picture of it he had painted for himself. And his first night there was spent sleepless in a ramshackle hotel above a butcher shop. Yet, as he tramped its roads and winding footpaths, Darjeeling grew on him. He sought out its history: a land of incomparable beauty originally inhabited by the Lepchas and other tribes; the British who took it for themselves in the mid-1800s so they could remember home; the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway once a vital artery, now a quaint toy train built-in 1881; and the vast tea gardens with which the British replaced verdant forests to produce the fabled Orange Pekoe. In the enmeshed lives of his neighbours of various castes, tribes, religions and cultures lived at the measured pace of a small town, Parimal discovered a richly cosmopolitan society that endured even under threat from cynical politics and haphazard urbanization.²⁸

Sanjoy Mookerjee wrote the book *Train to Darjeeling & Other Railway Tales*.²⁹ His narration, turn of phrase, language and excitement and love for the railways all come together into delightful tales. In the end, one craves more. Railways in India may have been used by the colonialists to exploit the country, but it has so seeped into the very culture of India that stories about the railways are akin to stories of India. Townsend Middleton and Sara Shneiderman (ed) book are *Darjeeling Reconsidered: Histories, Politics, Environments*.³⁰ The book analyzed the colonial excesses, labour movements to the Gorkhaland agitation and after, Darjeeling continues to live in anxiety and to understand the history of Darjeeling from the time of its transfer to its existential crisis in the post-colonial period through the prisms of history, politics and environment. The editors wish to avoid the stereotype of Darjeeling as a 'hill station' to present a more 'grounded understanding' of the town as a geopolitical space by connecting history with the present through ethnographic and political analysis. The early history of Darjeeling has been presented well, though the quest of the people of the hills for autonomy in the last century has not been properly analysed. These quibbles apart, the book are a welcome addition to the small corpus of academic books on Darjeeling.

Soumen Pal and Prasenjit Das edited the book containing Upendrakishor Roy Choudhury's writings about Darjeeling in many journals. This is the first time those writings are chronologically arranged to represent a complete picture of Upendrakishor's Darjeeling. The book contains enough supporting notes and information. West Government recently published Paschimbanga Sankhya special issue Darjeeling District. This special Sankhya is very informative and covered almost all nook and corner of this district. As a result, this Sankhya will help the researchers who wrote regional history particularly Darjeeling.

²⁸ Parimal Bhattacharya, *No Path in Darjeeling is Straight: Memories of a Hill Town*, Speaking Tiger Publishing Pvt Ltd, 2017

Sanjoy Mookerjee, *Train to Darjeeling & Other Railway Tales*, Amazon, 2020²⁹

³⁰ Townsend Middleton and Sara Shneiderman (ed.), *Darjeeling Reconsidered: Histories, Politics, Environments*, Oxford University Press, 2018

There is huge scope for the scholars to research Darjeeling. Current politico-geographical identities of Darjeeling from the crust of knowledge are largely inadequate in the writings of the post-colonial and post-modernist scholars. Nevertheless, a commendable academic and non-academic discussion of the contributions of the social and cultural reform movement and elsewhere towards the establishment of Gorkha identicalness still eludes us. Therefore, there are ample scopes to dig out the new research arena. Topics that are intimately interwoven with regional studies- regional character, its ethnic communities; socio-cultural settings, religious rituals, sentiments, the status of women, nature of economic activities and rise and growth of the tea companies and nature of exploitation, condition of the tea-laborers, etc.
